DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Environmental Management

Notice of Availability of Draft Basis for Determination under Section 3116 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (NDAA) for Closure of the F-Tank Farm at the Savannah River Site

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) announces the availability of the "Draft Basis for Section 3116 Determination for Closure of the F-Tank Farm at the Savannah River Site" (Draft FTF 3116 Basis Document) for public review and comment. DOE prepared the Draft FTF 3116 Basis Document pursuant to Section 3116(a) of the NDAA, which provides that the Secretary of Energy may, in consultation with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), determine that certain waste from reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel is not high-level waste) if the provisions set forth in Section 3116(a) are satisfied. To make this determination, the Secretary of Energy must determine that the waste in the FTF: (1) does not require permanent isolation in a deep geologic repository for spent fuel or high-level radioactive waste; (2) has had highly radioactive radionuclides removed to the maximum extent practical; and (3)(A) does not exceed concentration limits for Class C low-level waste and will be disposed of in compliance with the performance objectives in 10 CFR Part 61, Subpart C and pursuant to a State approved closure plan or State-issued permit; or (3)(B) exceeds concentration limits for Class C low-level waste but will be disposed of in compliance with the performance objectives of 10 CFR Part 61, Subpart C; pursuant to a State-approved closure plan or State-issued permit; and pursuant to plans developed by DOE in consultation with the NRC. Although not required by the NDAA, DOE is making the Draft FTF 3116 Basis Document available for public review and comment.

DATES: The comment period will end on January 7, 2011. Comments received after this date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: The Draft Basis for Determination is available on the Internet at http://sro.srs.gov/f_htankfarmsdocuments.htm, and is publicly available for review at the following locations:

District of Columbia

U.S. Department of Energy
Freedom of Information Act
Public Reading Room
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 1G-033
Washington, D.C. 20585
(202) 586-5955

South Carolina

University of South Carolina–Aiken
Gregg-Graniteville Library
471 University Parkway
Aiken, SC 29801
(803) 641-3320

Written comments on the Draft FTF Section 3116 Basis Document may be submitted by U.S. mail to the following address.

Ms. Sherri Ross
DOE-SR, Building 704-S, Room 43
U.S. Department of Energy
Savannah River Operations Office
Aiken, SC 29802
(ATTN: F-Tank Farm Draft Basis)

Alternatively, comments may also be filed electronically by e-mail to sherri.ross@srs.gov, or by Fax at (803) 208-7414.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FTF is a 22-acre site, located at the Savannah River Site near Aiken, South Carolina. The FTF consists of 22 underground radioactive waste storage tanks and supporting ancillary structures. Two of those waste tanks, Tanks 17 and 20 were cleaned and operationally closed in 1997, prior to enactment of NDAA Section 3116. Accordingly, Tanks 17 and 20 are not within the scope of this Draft FTF Section 3116 Basis Document. The major FTF ancillary structures are two evaporator systems, transfer lines, six diversion boxes, one catch tank, a concentrate transfer system, three pump pits, three pump tanks and eight valve boxes. There are three waste tank types in FTF with operating capacities ranging from 750,000 gallons (Type I tanks) to 1,300,000 gallons (Type III/IIIA and Type IV tanks). The waste tanks have varying degrees of secondary containment and in-tank structural features such as cooling coils and columns. All FTF waste tanks are constructed of carbon steel. The FTF was constructed to receive waste generated by various SRS production, processing and laboratory facilities.

DOE has initiated waste removal and cleaning of tanks and ancillary structures in the FTF using a process that includes removing bulk waste from tanks and ancillary structures and then deploying tested technologies to removing the majority of the remaining waste. After completing cleaning operations, a small amount of residual radioactive waste will remain in the tanks, ancillary equipment and piping. DOE plans to stabilize the residuals in the tanks and certain ancillary structures with grout. Tank waste storage and removal operations in the FTF are governed by a South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) industrial wastewater operating permit. Removal of tanks from service and stabilization of the FTF waste tanks and ancillary structures will be carried out pursuant to a State-approved closure plan, the *Industrial Wastewater General Closure Plan for F-Area Waste Tank Systems* (GCP). Specific Closure Modules for each tank or ancillary structure or groupings of tanks and ancillary structures will be developed and submitted to SCDHEC for approval. Subsequent to SCDHEC's approval of the specific and final closure configuration documentation and grouting, the tank/system will be removed from the State's industrial wastewater permit. This Draft FTF Section 3116 Basis Document applies to stabilized residuals in the waste tanks and ancillary structures, the waste tanks, and the ancillary structures in the FTF at the time of closure.

The Draft FTF Section 3116 Basis Document is being issued in draft form to facilitate public review and comment. DOE anticipates it will take approximately 9 months to complete consultation with the NRC, before the Secretary makes a potential determination under Section 3116 (a) of the NDAA.

Issued in Washington, DC, on October ___, 2010.

Frank Marcinowski,
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Technical and Regulatory Support